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on a certain matter, I think I am entitled to an answer from the Government on matters of fact. I am asking whether the Home Member declines to answer this question because it is controversial; otherwise I am entitled for an answer."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Probably ' confidential matters ' are really matters on which the Government think they should not give information on public grounds. That is all I can suggest."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" That is why I ask whether the Government gives that answer ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :— " Yes, Sir."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know what are the public interests which will be disserved by telling this House as to why this Government are sending more men than women to the Andamans without reference to the sex-ratio ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" It would amount to disclosing the nature of the correspondence with the Government of India regarding Malaya."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know if this Government is so callous as not to disclose this matter ? "

Deaths by suicide in the Federated Malay States.

*1275 *Q.*—Mr. C. GOPALA MENON : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether he is aware that the return of deaths by suicide of South Indians in the Federated Malay States shows a gradual increase in percentage of such deaths since 1921 ; and

(*b*) whether the Government of Madras have ascertained from the Government of the Federated Malay States the causes of death in each case and if so, what they are ?

A.—As the hon. Member is aware ' Emigration ' is a central subject. The Federated Malay States' report on the working of the Labour Department for the year 1927 shows that there has been an increase in the number of deaths from suicide during 1926 and 1927. The report has been placed on the Editors' table in G.O No. 1898 L., dated 4th August 1928. Forty-six cases of suicide were reported for the year 1927 as follows :—

Twenty-three cases—Reasons unknown.
Eighteen cases—Sickness.
Five cases—Domestic and financial troubles.

Mr. C. GOPALA MENON :—" In the answer given to this question it is stated ' there has been an increase in the number of deaths from suicide'. Is the Government aware that the increase is merely due to the increase in the sex ratio ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :— " No, Sir."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know how the hon. the Home Member gives that laconic answer ? "

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The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :— "Because I have seen the papers."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"What are the papers that he has seen? Will he be pleased to place those papers on the table?"

Dr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—"May I know as to why there has been an increase in the number of suicides? Is it due to low wages?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :— "This is a central subject, and we, as agents of the Government of India, are unable to give any further information in the matter."

Mr. ABDUL HAMID KHAN :—"As agents of the Government of India are they not carrying out the wishes of the Government of India, and is it not therefore their duty to safeguard the interests of the labourers who are going from this Presidency by advising the Government of India?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I must ask for notice."

Mr. K. V. R. SWAMI :—"Is it a fact that suicides are on the increase on account of oppression?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I must ask for notice."

Mr. R. NAGAN GOWDA :—"It has been stated in the answer that there has been an increase in suicides in the year 1926–27. May I know what is the rate of increase?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :— "I want notice."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"On a point of order, Mr. President. My hon. Friend, the Home Member, says 'we are agents of the Government of India and therefore we cannot answer these questions.' Is it right?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"After these questions are over the hon. Member will raise the point."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—"May I know, Sir, whether this Government, who sent the coolies to Andamans and who are responsible for their lives, made any enquiries in the matter?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"We made all the enquiries that we could possibly make regarding Malaya."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—"Has this Government made any enquiry as to the cause of increase in suicides?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I want notice."

Report of the Standard Wage Inquiry Committee.

*1276 *Q.*—Mr. C. GOPALA MENON : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government of Madras are in receipt of the report of the Standard Wage Inquiry Committee appointed by the Indian Immigration Committee of the Federated Malay States ;